Maria de Médicis, queen of France 1639

DECLARATION

OF THE

QVEENE,

Mother of the moſt

CHRISTIAN

KING.

Containing the reaſons of her departure out of the *Low-Countreys*;

And diſadvowing a *Manifeſt*, ſet out in her Name upon the ſame Argument.

LONDON,

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A DECLARATION OF THE QUEEN

Mother of the most CHRISTIAN KING

Containing the reasons of her departure out of the Kingdom at this juncture.

And discovering a Design of Set out in her Name upon the Isle of Wight.

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A Declaration of the Queene,

Mother of the moſt Chriſtian KING,

Containing the reaſons of her departure out of the *Low-Countreys*, and diſadvowing a *Manifeſt*, ſet out in her name, upon the ſame Argument.

PErſons of my quality, being placed on the Theatre of the World, and their lives expoſed to publike view; by how much their Eſtate is the greater, by ſo much their liberty is the leſſe. For although they are not tyed in Conſcience, to give an account of their Actions to any but to God, who is the ſole Judge of their duty; yet, their Honor inforceth them many times to lay open, even their ſecret thoughts to men, who are the Judges of their reputation.

If then my arrivall in *Flanders* heretofore, hath given ſo much occaſion of diſcourſe to all Chriſtendome, my departure lately from thence hath cauſed little leſſe throughout all Europe. But as ill Fortune hath as little, wherewithall to re-

compence juſt prayſes, as good hath too much to reward flatteries; The miſery of mine in either time hath beene cauſe, that more intereſſed tongues and pennes have beene found to blame me, then charitable to defend me.

So I underſtand now from all parts, that they endeavour by divers meanes to condemne the deſigne and manner of my departure out of the Low-Countreys, as well by letters, written in ſeverall places, as alſo by memorialls, relations and Gazetts, publiſhed and diſperſed, and by manifeſts, ſet forth even under my owne name; amongſt which one is come to my hand in Print, a piece indeed, which ſeemes to be to my Juſtification; But in effect, tends not but to trouble and imbroyle me on all ſides. Briefly, I perceive no Imaginary thing omitted, to give ſiniſter Interpretations to my retreat.

Now, as I have cauſe to feare, that ſo many deviſes may prevaile againſt the ſincerity of my intentions, and inclinations: and to the end, that this pretended Manifeſt, which paſſeth for my owne, may not hereafter be of any force in this nature, eſpecially having been publikely ſeene in my hands, which might ſerve as a tacit Approbation of it, if I ſhould diſſemble it: e thought it but due to my reputation, and true Intereſts, to ſet forth this publike Declaration, containing the diſadvowing of that piece, and

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ſuch like, if there be any to be found, together with the principall motives, which made me retire from the Low-Countreys, the occaſions which made me paſſe into *England*, and the reſolutions wherein hitherto I remaine, that there may be no cauſe left of ſuch various diſcourſe to my diſadvantage.

I deſire then that every one may know, That when I took *Flanders* for my refuge, I look't upon that place, but as a neighbour Port, whereto I repaired to avoid the tempeſt, that then diſordered me; and not as a Countrey I would have choſen to have remained or ſetled in, my obligation to *France*, being too ſtrict to admit of ſuch a thought.

I would likewiſe have it knowne, that in all the time I ſojourned in *Flanders*, as well during the Peace, as ſince the rupture betwixt the two Crownes, my principall cares, have tended to my reconciliation with the King my Sonne, and I never concealed this deſire, which even my Sonne in Law the King of *Spaine* did ever profeſſe to eſteeme both juſt and commendable.

It is true, that having for the ſpace of ſeaven yeeres in vaine laboured an accommodation, and now diſcovering by adviſe of the wiſer, neither paſſionate, nor intereſſed, and even by reaſon and experience, that after all poſſible care imployed,

ployed, it hath rather beene retonded then advanced; And that the place, wherein I remained seemed a perpetuall obstacle to all encounters, which might lead toward it, as well by reason of the breach continued, as also for other powerfull Considerations: At last, I found it would be most agreeable with my affaires, to live (at least for a time) in some place free from Suspition; And the Season being then proper for drinking the Spaw Waters, when I first entred into this deliberation, I resolved to make some stay in the Country of *Liege*, a place Newtrall, hoping thereby, to finde as well remedy for my indispositions, as expedients for the advancement of my reconciliation.

This was my cleere Intention without any resolution concerning my returne into *Flanders*; And to speake the truth, this incertainity wherein I found my selfe, hindred me from communicating the particulars of my designe to my Nephew the Cardinall Infante; besides, his imployments in the warres, held him at such a distance from me at the time of my departure, that I could not have opportunity so much as to take my leave of him.

Parting then from *Brussells*, I went directly towards *Liege*, where the expectation of those people was as observable as the applause, wherewith I was received in all the Cities of that Dominion.

minion. And I have reaſon, to acknowledge an oblation to theſe Magiſtrates for the orders, they had given for my reception, whereſoever I was to ſtay. Nevertheleſſe, having before diſpatch'd into *Holland* and other parts, to make proviſion for my ſecurity, during the time I ſtayed in the Country of *Liege*; beſides, foreſeeing many difficulties in the ſafety of my abode there, I diſcovered that there would have beene yet more in my departure thence, if I ſhould have beene neceſſitated to have left that place, ſo that finding all theſe accidents, as well by advice from ſuch as I had employed abroad, as by the obſervations I made upon the place, where I was, and having yet free paſſage for *Holland*, I thought no time was to be loſt in ſeeking ſome ſafe and quiet habitation which to me was then of moſt importance, conſidering my inconſtant condition. So that for avoyding further hazard, I reſolved preſently to paſſe into *England*, as to the place of moſt ſecurity.

But before I proceed further in this diſcourſe, I muſt not omit the ſucceſſe, wherewith it pleaſed God to favour my voyage, which indeed was beyond all that I could deſire. My Couſin, the prince of *Orange*, who met me at my very firſt entrance into the Country, received me in the Equipage, I was (which indeed might have made me unknowne) as if my adverſity had ſerved me for ornaments, and as if I had been in as great ſplendor as in my higheſt proſperity. And as for

the States, they did not entertaine me, as a Princesse of my condition, desiring passage, but rather as a triumphant King, comming to visite them, and impart his victories to them. And for my Cousin the Princesse of Orange, who accompanied me through all *Holland*, she lived with me so respectfully and obliegeingly, and made the Country and her houses wherein I lodged, so agreeable to me, as that I could have almost thought them my owne, had not my ill fortune already too much accustomed me to know, that they are no more mine. And as to the entertainment given me by the King of Great Brittaine, my Sonne in Law, all that I can say of it, would but derogate from what was publikely seen, and my selfe must acknowledge: By His extraordidinary magnificence at my entrance into *London*, he hath published the esteem he had of my Person, by the cheerefulnesse appearing in his own Countenance, and in that of all his Subjects; he shewed how deare my presence was to him. But above all, I acknowledge the true friendship, which I read in his heart, the freenes of his proceeding, and the tender affections of the Queen my Daughter, towards me, which have few examples, and haue given so much ease to my pressing afflictions, that it could not have been more, if God had sent an angel from heaven to comfort me. Insomuch, that I could not have had in all my voyage other occasion then of joy, if those things, which were prepared for my delight had

not

not likewise beene Subjects of my Sorrow: In that they made me thinke, that the late King, my lord, appeared yet living in my person in strange Countrys, but in effect his very memory seemed dead for my sake in his owne Kingdome.

Now to returne to my discourse, I must say, that having runne over all that hath past in this my retreat from *Flanders*, I cannot thinke, that any can charge me with neglect of my reputation for my diligence in the good of my affaires, nor that it will be hard to perswade such, as will indifferently judge thereof, that in this Retreat I have done any thing, either in Circumstances or Consequences, more, then all the time I sojourned in the Low-Countries, which may be repugnant to gratitude: And I adde, that I had done nothing unseemly, if, when I had left the territories of *Spain*, I had remained in *Holland*, though it be an Enemies Country, because in this Occasion I had not sought *Holland*, as an Enemy to *Spaine*, but as an Allie and Confederate with *France*. And this quality of *Holland*, which was then advantagious to me, was not hurtfull to *Spaine*, in profiting me, So that remaining in *Holland*, I should not have prejudiced *Spaine*, in doing my selfe good.

And as for the bruites spread abroad, that I went into *Holland* to doe ill offices to *Spaine*, and that some of my people by order from me, had

given up to my Cousin the Prince of *Orange* the Mappe of sundry places of the Low-Countries. It is a rumour so ridiculous, that it deserves no answer but of scorne. Surely it had been much to my credit, by this example to have demonstrated to my Cousin the Prince of *Orange*, who received me so courteously, how well I used my hosts when I was gone from them, and besides, in giving him a good impression of my integrity, I had also made him know that I had a better of his providence, judging it such, as that he had not care enough to provide himselfe of a Plattforme of all the places of the Low-Countries. Truly this would have passed for a faire Compliment at my arrivall.

And this rumor is not more contemptible then another quite contrary is false, savoring of a malicious Invention, That I should go into *Holland* to treat of the Truce, or to practise against that State, and against my Cousin the Prince of *Orange*, under the pretence of hospitality.

But time having made appear even to the most simple, that these rumours were altogether false, and reason having made the wisest apprehend, that they had no resemblance of truth: I will rely upon that which is of more weight, and for Justification of all my designes, declare ingeniously, what were the motives of my resolution, in regard both of *France* and *Spaine*, whilst I remained

nedin the Low-Countreys, and, why I retired from thence.

All the time I passed in *Flanders*, I kept this Temper, that my affections, as well as my behaviour, were alwaies Neutrall in respect of Publique affaires betweene *France* and *Spaine*. The assistance which I received from *Spaine* on one side, and the Obligations, which I had to *France* on the other side, obliged me to carry my selfe in that Manner. And to speake clearely, I should have held it as unjust, whilest I remained in the Dominions of *Spaine*, and lived at their expence, to take part with *France*, to the prejudice of *Spain*, as contrary to my owne inclination to have taken part with *Spaine* to the prejudice of *France*. And howsoever that pretended Manifest aggravating the complaints, which it makes under my name of *Spaine*, doth artificially insinuate, that I have borne much affection to the good of their affaires, which is but a hidden venome, to perplex me on the part of *France*, The truth is, that *Spain* in that point hath no more obligation to me, then that I have ever passionately longed for that Union and Concord between those two Crowns, whereof in former times I had laid the foundations by a double Alliance. And that besides I have alwayes endeavoured since the rupture, to contribute all I was able to the reestablishment of Peace.

God forbid, I ſhould deſire to pay the new obligations, I have to *Spaine*, to the prejudice of thoſe ancient bonds, which I have contracted with *France*, it is to that I have vowed my firſt affections, And it is that, which ſhall for ever keepe them with the aſhes of my deceaſed Lord.

But God forbid likewiſe, that for any advantage I might have from *France*, it ſhould ever enter into my thoughts, to diſadvow the Obligations I have to *Spaine*. I know too well, that it is the utmoſt degree of ingratitude to denie benefits received; I am ſo farre from that, that I will alwayes proclaime them with advantage. And I confeſſe it troubles me that I have no other meanes to acquit my ſelfe then on all occaſions (as on this) to acknowledge the ſubſiſtence, which the King of *Spaine* my Sonne in Law gave me ſeven yeers together, and the proofs of Cordiall love, which I received from the Queen my Daughter, the care which my late ſiſter the Infanta had of my perſon: who beſides did no leſſe inſtruct me with her vertues, then comfort me with her good offices: And laſtly the great courteſie and good will of my Nephew the Cardinal Infante: All which, are effects which I referre principally to the King of *Spaine* my Sonne in Law, to whoſe intentions my Nephew and my deceaſed Siſter, the Infanta, have but joyned their naturall inclinations.

Moreover

Moreover I am farre from weakening theſe publike teſtimonies (which I deſire to confirme in all places) by making complaint againſt any of his Officers, and herein I am injured by the Authors of that pretended *Manifeſt*, in their expoſing falſe ones to the view of the world, under my name; On the contrary it imports me, that it be knowne (as it is true) that in caſe there had been any diſreſpect of me through the fault of any Officers in *Flanders* (which yet would have been contrary to the orders of the King of *Spaine* my Sonne in Law) the good entertainment I received from the Maſter would in my opinion have covered the errour of the Servants, And although peradventure it would not have taken away my reſſentiment of it, yet diſcretion would have taught me to have concealed it.

Neither ſhall it ever be ſayd, that any ſuch thing falls from me, But rather expreſſions of the entire ſatisfaction I received from the King of *Spain* my Sonne in Law, And at my departure from the Hague, I diſpatched an expreſſe to my Nephew the Cardinall Infante, to teſtifie to him my Acknowledgements and to let him underſtand my intention of comming out of the Low-Countries; which is the ſame wherein this day I perſiſt, and which I will cleerely expreſſe to conclude this Declaration.

My end neither was nor is in all theſe proceedings

dings any other then my reconciliation with the King my Son: To the effecting of which, those meanes, which would seeme hard and troublesome to persons of my quality; shall be pleasant and easie to me. Nor doe I accompt it of the number of those painefull means, to affect those whom he honors with his principall trust: I will do that willingly though they give me no cause: and am resolved to omit nothing (no not that which I shall know to be in vaine) to gaine the friendship of the King my Sonne.

It would be a happines precious to me, yet due by so many just Titles that I hold my selfe as blameles for the pretending to it, as innocent of the least ambition thereby to partake of the Government. Nor should I pardon my selfe if I had any temptation of that nature, and withall, if I held not that authority as unusefull for my particular happines, as I esteem the love of the King my Sonne, necessary to my present contentment.

And it will be easie to beleeve, that I am of this opinion, if the present may be judged by what is past, and to that end it may be considered how I behaved my selfe during my regency, wherein I made use of it, and with what Spirit I governed, when through my misfortune and that of *France*, in loosing the late King my Lord, I was ingaged to imploy my care and diligence, to uphold the publique affaires, which were

then

then in eminent danger. And when the Common Vote and consent of the states of the Kingdome had committed to my care, the fortune of the State, I think I so forgot my own, that even Slander and my enemies together, never dreamed to lay to my charge, that I had any thought of making Advantage of that Authority: Nor that Ambition or Interest had upon any occasion a Vote in my private Councells. As for the former, it cannot be doubted, since it is cleere, that I never sought in all my Regency other glory, then to leave the Kingdome as quiet and florishing under the government of a woman (notwithstanding all the troubles, that then come upon it) as one of the greatest Kings of the world saw it at his death, after twelve yeeres of setled peace. And as for Interest, I dare boldly say, without offence to modesty (and *France* cannot without ingratitude deny it) that I so ordered the Treasure of my Son, that in preserving it, I had care of it, as of my owne; but in expending it, I considered it as the goods of another. So that at the end of my labours, there is nothing left me, but the quality of a Mother, which God himselfe cannot take from me.

These actions, whereof the publique monuments themselves will be for ever witnesses, are the only Trophees, which I have erected to my Memory. These Actions, I say, are the only Citadells, which I have rais'd to my defence and

have built in the heart of the King my Sonne, in that of the French, and in my owne Conscience. But certainly not to deceive my selfe, it is upon this last foundation, whereon I settle my principall hopes, and in all accidents, my most solide satisfaction. And lastly, although it should happen by the secret reasons of Gods Providence, that the rest of my days should passe in disgrace, and though I should never have before my death the comfort of seeing the King my Sonne, yet I will not leave to give him, absent, as now I doe, my continuall blessings. And I will finish my life, as I now end this Declaration; Beseeching God that these my blessings may be as effectuall to him, as if I had been ever favourably treated.

Signed

Marie.

and underneath is written,

This Declaration hath beene read publikely before the whole Court of the Queen, in presence of her Majestie. And after it was Signed with her own hand and by her commandement, the Originall remaines in the hand of the Vicount.

FABRONI.

Burlow (T)
Popery &c
1673 216 Car